

ELECTRONIC ART
AND ANIMATION CATALOG

ART & DESIGN
GALLERIES

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SIGGRAPH2008

SIGGRAPH 2008 Art & Design Galleries

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	Table of Contents	22	Evan Douglas Studio el // Tower	48	African Kuba Textiles: Structural Inference and Contemporary Design Using Shape Grammars The Generative Design Team	SLOW ART	
5	Jury & Acknowledgements	23	Foster + Partners Project Crystal Millenium Tower Russia Tower			64	Slow Art: Call for Submissions
DESIGN & COMPUTATION							
7	Letter from the Chair	26	Grimshaw Architects Tower Concept A Tower Concept B	50	Visual-Physical Design Grammars Terry Knight Larry Sass	66	Letter from the Jury
8	Imagine the Algorithm William J. Mitchell	28	HOK International VAO New Songdo Towers Office Tower Design	52	Gantenbein Vineyard Façade, Fläsch Bearth & Deplazes with Gramazio & Kohler	67	Erosion
10	Origins and Ends: Craftsmanship in the Work of Hauer and Rosado Phillip G. Bernstein	31	Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates White Magnolia Tower The Pinnacle	53	Tropism Commonwealth and Joshua Davis	68	Edrex Fontanilla Robert Goldschmidt s[tr]eam
12	Kolam Ketki Dhanesha Geetha Anand	33	SHoP Architects World Business Center Busan	54	Omi.MGX Assa Ashuach	69	Yunsil Heo Hyunwoo Bang <Oasis>
13	Fourier Carpet and Body Blanket Jenny E. Sabin	34	Skidmore, Owings & Merrill Hudson Yards Tower Lotte Supertower Yongsan Tower	55	Ratio.MGX Naomi Kaempfer	70	Anab Jain Alex S. Taylor Life and Death of Energy-Autonomous Devices
14	Branching Morphogenesis Jenny E. Sabin Peter Lloyd Jones Annette Fierro Jonathan Asher Andrew Lucia	37	Zaha Hadid Architects Dubai Signature Towers The Opus Office Tower Cairo Tower	56	One_shot.MGX Patrick Jouin	71	Shawn Lawson Migrations
15	Tensor Shades Adams Kara Taylor Sawako Kaijima Panagiotis Michalatos	40	The Search of Form, the Search of Order: Gaudí and the Sagrada Familia Carlos Barrios	57	Strato Anna Silberschmidt and Nicola Sansò	72	Gabriele Peters Dark Days - New York
16	Parametric Urbanism, Procedural Complexity Zaha Hadid Architects	42	Continua Erwin Hauer Enrique Rosado	58	Mathematical Sculptures Bathsheba Grossman	73	Nathan Selikoff Tiled Faces
17	Nanjing South Station Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates	44	Weaving Public and Private: Interior Wall Studies Neil Katz, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill	59	XURF, HyperSurfaces Haresh Lalvani	74	The Verge Gregory Shirah
18	Phare Tower La Défense, Paris Morphosis	45	Islamic Patterns Craig S. Kaplan	60	Curved Origami Jeannine Mosely	75	Anna Ursyn Water Planet
20	A Landscape of 3D-Printed Skyscrapers	46	Ice-rays George Stiny			76	Kirk Woolford Carlos Guedes Echo Locations
21	Architecture Research Office/DVB Hudson Yards Tower					77	Hybrids
						78	Theo. A. Artz VR Comper ver. 5E: A Perspective Primer
						79	Jonathan Bachrach The Intimacy Machine
						80	Dennis de Bel Associative Audio Design

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONT.)

81	Tim Borgmann fragment.0140.02b ('Silhouette')	96	Takahiro Hayakawa KASHIKOKIMONO -Ver.J-
82	Steve Gompf Televisor 1910 German	97	Kenneth Huff 2006.7 (Elemental Series)
83	boredomresearch RealSnailMail [RSM]	98	Miseong Lee Tek-Jin Nam Through the Time Tunnel
84	Hyun Jean Lee Ali Mazalek Cross-Being: Dancer (The Spinning Screen)	99	Armella Leung Olivier Oswald The Dreaming Pillow
85	Wil Lindsay TimeFrames: Digital Magic Lantern Slides	100	Qian Li Prelude
86	Kevin Mack Neurosymphonic Self Reflection Divine Instruments of Technology	101	Takahiro Matsuo Phantasm
87	Paul Magee Chorus	102	Mark Stock Smoke Water Fire
88	Joo Youn Paek Fold Loud	103	Ryoko Ueoka Hiroki Kobayashi Wearable Forest: Feeling of Belonging to Nature
89	Ross Racine Digital Drawings	104	Traversal
90	Andreas Zingerle Solargrafica	105	Santiago Caicedo Moving Still
91	Rhyhms	106	Jorn Ebner Navigator
92	Joanna Berzowska Di Mainstone Skorpions: kinetic electronic garments	107	Dylan Moore Meros
93	Ed Cookson Edd Dawson-Taylor Adam Hoyle Lewis Sykes Olly Venning Spacequatica	108	Hye Yeon Nam Wonderland
94	Jason Freeman Graph Theory	109	Aaron Oldenburg The Mischief of Created Things
95	David Gladstein FF-	110	Lily & Honglei Forbidden City
		111	Jing Zhou Ch'an Mind, Zen Mind Series: Purity and Infinity
		112	Japan Media Arts Festival

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SIGGRAPH 2008 Art & Design Galleries | Design & Computation

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SIGGRAPH 2008 ART & DESIGN GALLERIES | DESIGN & COMPUTATION INTRODUCTION

We are witnessing a shift in how designers conceptualize, detail, and fabricate their work. Architects increasingly talk about scripting or writing an architectural façade rather than drawing it. Buildings and everyday objects are conceptualized and fabricated via lines of code in addition to being drawn by hand or with CAD software. Tools for manipulating digital information have provided designers new means for expression as well as new “materials” with radically different properties.

Digital methods and tools used by architects and designers have co-evolved with computer graphics and interactive technologies in leaps and bounds. The SIGGRAPH 2008 Design & Computation exhibit weaves together analog and digital, past and present, theory and artifact to give visitors a taste of an exploding field. The work has been selected to invite multiple layers of engagement and address the SIGGRAPH community’s wide range of interests.

Contemporary developments, however, are not without precedent. Long before advanced computer graphics, designers reshaped their tools. For example, the work of Joseph Marie Jacquard was not only significant for the textile industry, but also laid the foundation for contemporary computational design processes. On the one hand, his invention revolutionized the way in which silk-weavers from his hometown, Lyon, wove elaborate and varied figures. On the other hand, Jacquard’s work embodied the ability to control a sequence of operations and fabricate an end result in a single process.

Two Design & Computation discussion panels complement the exhibit, raising questions on complexity and craftsmanship. In the Complexity panel, architects and designers ask how tools and methods used by architects, artists, and designers contribute to the complexity of built forms. What are the problems and opportunities that increased complexity engenders both for built forms and for people’s experience of these forms? The Craftsmanship panel examines the relationship among creator, tool, and final creation. Artists and designers reflect on how they conceive their work, discussing whether mediation through a digital fabrication processes alters their relationship with materials and their creations.

The exhibit would have not been possible without the intensive involvement of the gallery committee, advisors, contractors, sponsors, and the contributors themselves. I would like to thank all of these people for their hard work, generosity, support, inspiration, and endless patience. We are also indebted to our teachers of design and architecture: Edith Ackermann, John Biln, Terry Knight, Irene McWilliam, and Bill Mitchell. This exhibit is dedicated to them.

Lira Nikolovska
Autodesk, Inc.

SLOW ART: CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

In our digital culture, we can task simultaneously, message instantly, and prototype rapidly, but, in doing so, do we create an oasis for contemplation, or do we fuel a hunger for yet more speed? As technology colors all aspects of our world, we see the inevitable pendular response in campaigns that advocate slowness.

The Italian membership organization Cittaslow’s manifesto defines criteria for slow cities, focusing on improved quality of life. Internationally, people are organizing to protect regional food systems, traditions, and cuisine as part of the Slow Food Movement. There is a return to artisanship and a renewed focus on the local, as opposed to the global.

Throughout time, artists have pioneered the important task of illustrating and preserving humanity. For the SIGGRAPH 2008 art program, we are seeking art and investigations that address our overarching conference themes (Complexity and Accessibility, Future History, Global Responsibility, Impact on Society, and Professional Development and Education) through the filter of Slowness. Some questions we hope to explore are:

- In what ways do new media artists employ the tools of speed to address the issue of slowness?
- How does the speed afforded by technology affect the work we make?
- With the rapid changes in new media, how will these artworks be preserved, and do questions of legacy affect the creative process?
- How can new media art assist in the preservation of cultural diversity?

All submissions will be juried. International works are highly encouraged. All forms of digitally mediated work are eligible, as well as works made in traditional media that comment on technology. Selections will be made according to the following criteria: relevance to the SIGGRAPH 2008 themes, creative use of media, depth of critical exploration, and quality of accompanying artist statement.

Our final exhibition will be a gallery at SIGGRAPH 2008, smaller than in past years. In addition, there will be an exhibition of curated artworks. Through both of these exhibits, we hope to showcase the strongest examples of current new media work.

Lina Yamaguchi,
Stanford University

“FAST. IT’S NOT FOR EVERYONE.”

Two “turtles,” Bob and Karolyn Slowsky, promote this tongue-in-cheek slogan for Comcast’s high-speed internet service, but the campaign is indirectly representative of a growing contingent of people who respond unenthusiastically to an increasing pace of a life in which speed dating, quick tips, and microwavable frozen dinners are commonplace. Proponents of The Slow Movement, originating with Slow Food, a response to the fast food industry, are re-examining cities, schools, travel, exercise, sex, and even design, to name just some of the descendant branches. Slow, in many cases, is equated with “bad” or “old.” The Slow Movement seeks to reframe the concept in a positive light, calling our attention to quality, enjoyment, and balance.

Questions inspired by the Slowskys’ campaign (since replaced with a genetically modified, turbo-engined rabbit/panther hybrid) are reflected in the explorations of SIGGRAPH 2008’s Slow Art gallery. Showcasing works from 41 artists meditating on fast and slow living within a landscape of technology, the exhibit speaks to environmental issues, future history, leisure as an indispensable component of a well-balanced lifestyle, and the means by which we get from here to there. They share condensed perceptions of time and interrogate the limits of performance, distance, desire, and respite. The Slow Art jury, reviewers, and myself were delighted by the variety and quality of submitted artworks from over 300 artists, and we wish we could have accommodated more.

Thanks to the keen eyes and wisdom of jury and committee member Gemma Shusterman, we are pleased to present the works in themed areas: Erosion, Hybrids, Rhythms, and Traversal. I’d also like to thank jury members Gemma, Lee Arnold, Janeann Dill, Gerfried Stocker, and Victoria Szabo for their acute insights and endurance during the jury process. Additional thanks to Victoria, who also served on the committee, for directing our technology needs and for facilitating the creation of our audio tour. All submitters to this year’s gallery received compelling and thoughtful evaluations from our 22 online reviewers. I was especially moved by the reviewers’ enthusiasm and generosity, evidenced by the quality and length of their commentary.

Thank you also to Slow Art committee members Sue Gollifer and Jana Whittington for their advice, support, and good humor. To our enthusiastic XSVs (ex-student volunteers) Mikki Rose and Camille Trejo. To Rebecca Strzelec, Create Sphere Director, for cocktails and keeping us on track. To Phil Carizzi, Chair of The Studio, for colored pencils and handy iPhone access. To my counterpart Lira Nikolovska, Design & Computation Gallery Chair, for her collaborative spirit and moral support, and to our illustrious administrative assistant, Mona Kasra, for doing everything well and always with a big smile. To all of the SIGGRAPH 2008 committee members and contractors who helped make every aspect of Slow Art happen, with a special shout-out to Jim Clark for his infinite patience. To Kevin Mack for making the wonderful animations that grace the entrance to the gallery. To our sponsors, whose support makes the gallery possible, and last, but not at all least, to the Slow Art artists. Thank you for making this beautiful, fun exhibit, and for reminding people to slow down once in a while.

Lina Yamaguchi
Stanford University

SLOWING ART

Speed is an implicit element of technological design. In most advanced technologies, faster is often equated with better, often for good reason. Strides in processor speed and bandwidth have given us access to lifesaving data, kept us connected with friends and family on the other side of the world, and enhanced our quality of life in a myriad of ways. But we tend to pay little attention to how speed influences the way we live our lives, even as we continually adopt new behaviors and expectations in response to its pressures.

We have altered our sense of time.

Some of us still remember dial-up, but we find our attention waning when a web page takes longer than a few seconds to load. Our cars must accelerate from zero to 60 in an unnecessarily short interval, and our news must be delivered with nearly clairvoyant timing. We demand performance from our objects and surroundings, and that demand comes back to us.

We are expected to maintain connections through our tools, and since we are connected, we must respond. We check email, voicemail, and SMS messages with compulsive enthusiasm. Our lives are fixed to the demands of our “time-saving” devices. Distance has come to be measured by the strength of a cell phone or wifi signal rather than a physical measurement. Space and time have been condensed by our fast-paced lives. As our machines maneuver around the “performance limits” suggested by Moore’s law, they press us to imagine what is analogous for humanity. What limits do we have, need, or indeed want, when it comes to speed? It is with this question in mind that we asked artists to reconsider the paradigm of speed and instead consider the concept of Slow Art.

The result was quite varied. Some artists chose to delve into the nature of their surroundings and investigate erosion and the effects of time. Others chose to work with materials that evoke a sense of nostalgia but connect them to contemporary concepts or objects, creating hybrids that highlight the momentum in our culture and its artifacts. Some draw our attention to the sensory realm, playing with rhythm and space-time patterns, vividly layering time and space. Others focus on a traversal of space over time. All of these works ask us to step out of the fast lane and consider the possibilities when speed is not an exigent force.

The concept of “slow” is gaining momentum in some areas of human culture. It has even spawned movements. “Slow food” and the popularity of yoga and meditation point to a public need for respite from our speed-driven culture. In the Slow Art gallery the interpretations are quite personal. Whether procedural or literal, material or conceptual, the works consider the component of life that is always in short supply: time.

Gemma Shusterman
AtomicBee

EROSION

The process of erosion is undeniable and unyielding, whether through oxidation, gravitational stress, or obsolescence. These works investigate the nature of material existence. They incorporate the wear of time and repetition to highlight and explore the processes of disintegration and entropy.

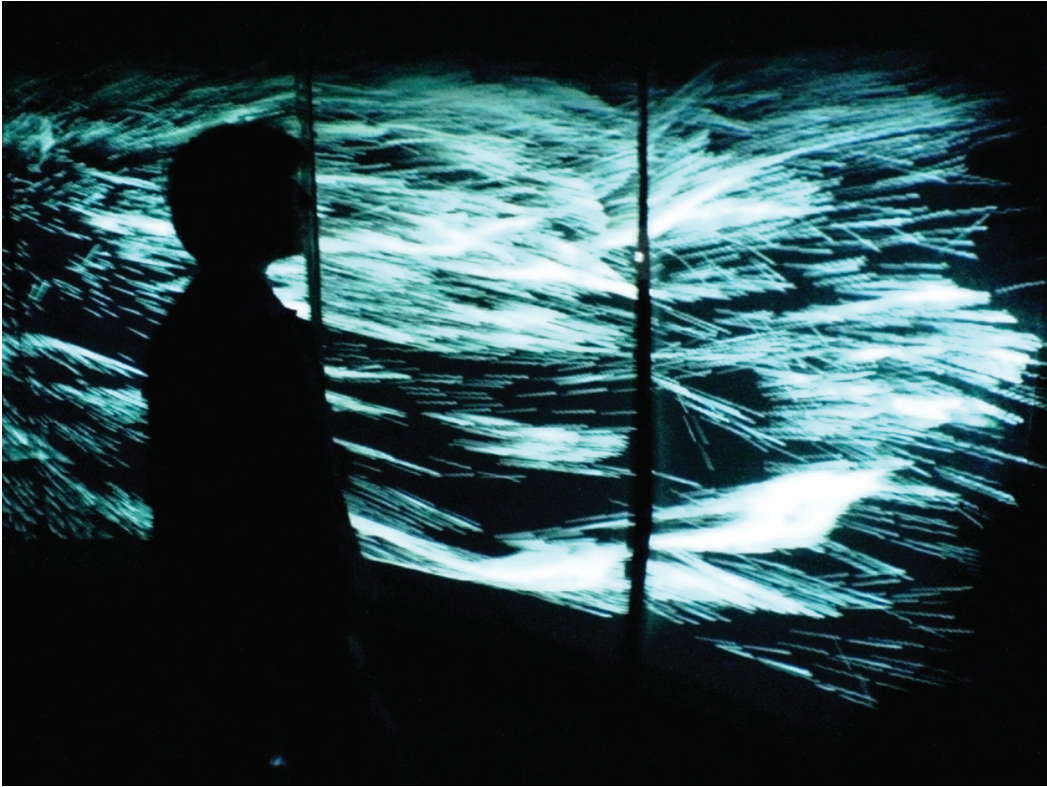
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Echo Locations



The Echo Locations project is a series of site-specific installations utilizing motion sensing to invite observers to slow down, give the site their attention, and be still long enough for ghostly images to form of how people have moved through the site in the past. The project builds on motion capture, particle systems, and slow interaction techniques developed for Will.0.w1sp. However, whereas the Will.0.w1sp characters move through motion sequences captured in a studio, Echo Locations makes a stronger link to specific locations by capturing motion in “real life.” The characters recreated by the particle software become similar to ghosts – repeating movements that once occurred in the location. Only when visitors to the site are still and quiet do the projections reform and return to their movements.

The intention of the piece is to use interaction to make visitors reflect on their personal impact on an environment as they move through a location, and to hint at its history. The installation uses sound in an attempt to awaken curiosity and invite visitors to various locations. The audio environment mixes samples recorded onsite together with simple melodies to create echoes of past inhabitants. If visitors to the site are calm and still, these sounds are played out very melodically, but if visitors move around or make noise of their own, the sound from the particle flows becomes very sharp, with aggressive scratches and hisses. Just as the motion of the particle dancers evokes the site’s past history, so does the audio environment.

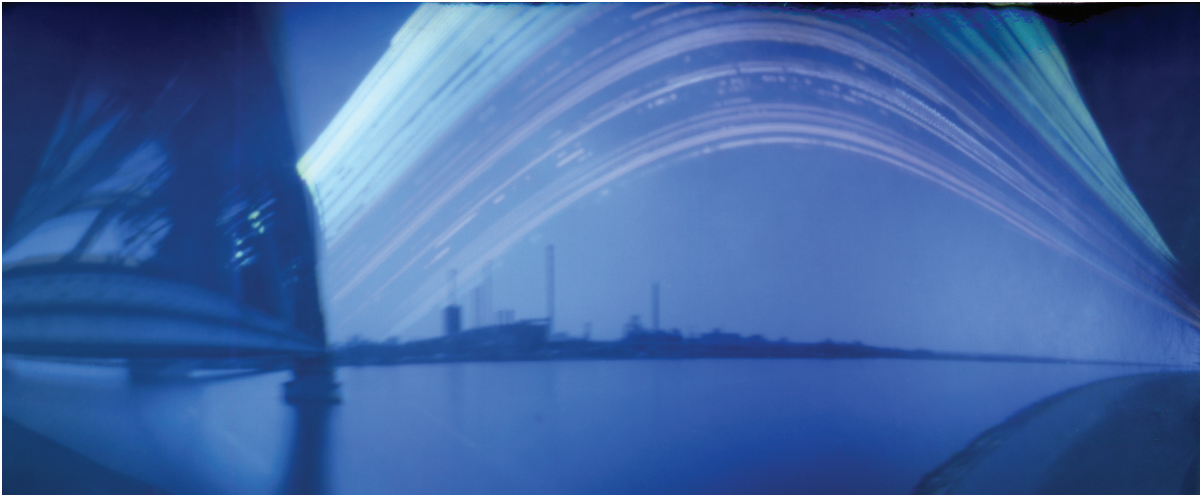
HYBRIDS

The objects in this section draw strength from unique combinations. When joined, these objects create timeless subjects rich with contrasts. They are at once nostalgic and innovative, natural and artificial, known and unknown. It is through these contrasts that we are drawn toward a deeper understanding of the familiar.

Andreas Zingerle

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Solargrafica



Solargrafica records the paths of the sun by using a lens-less camera with exposure times up to five months. With this process, the invisible movements of the sun can be made visible as landscapes. A soundscape processed with granular synthesis samples creates a time-space relationship between light and sound. The visitor can interact with the sound by moving within the installation and focusing on the different camera modules.

The Interface Culture master and doctoral program at the University of Art and Industrial Design was founded in 2004 by Christa Sommerer and Laurent Mignonneau.

RHYTHMS

Rhythms are the patterns that adorn our journey from one point in time to the next. A breath, a heartbeat, a note from a song, have no significance without a reference to what comes before and after. These projects document patterns in time and add an element of play. At once disruptive and hopeful, their rhythms present the potential for a new examination of time and space.

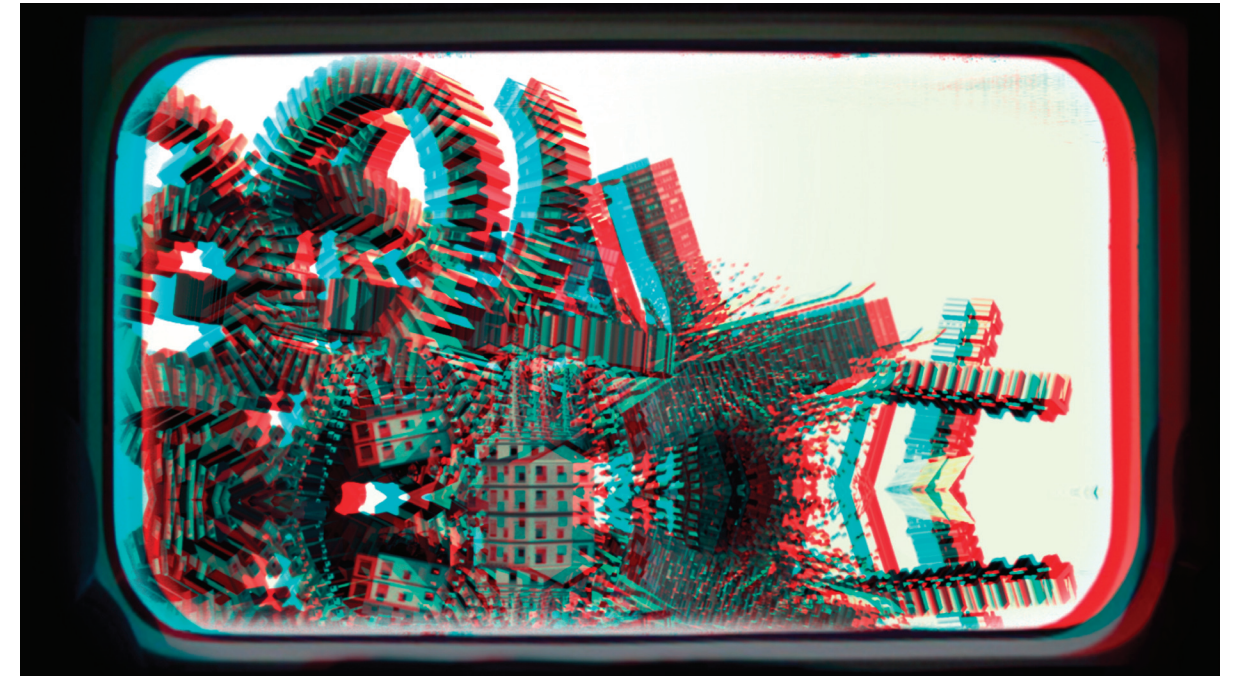
TRAVERSAL

As humans, our paths define our relationship with time. Our daily commutes, our leisure activities, the floor plans of our homes, form the circuits that bring us through a series of successive moments to our destinations. Whether on foot, in autos, or on bikes, where we are, or where we think we need to be, can transform our perceptions of our bodies and their surroundings.

Santiago Caicedo

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Moving Still



To be a routine traveler. No surprises at the starting point, no surprises at the point of arrival. To feel the monotony of a recurring journey made too many times. Looking through the window of a train, imagining all that happens outside, following the rhythm, and then choosing not to.

Asking ourselves whether we want to, or if we can, still change roads.

Moving Still is a stereoscopic short film that uses an experimental technique from a single camera shot mixed with CG elements that build and destroy the city.

The film infuses routine travel with fantasy, challenging the monotony of our metaphorical journeys.